

Identification Notes for wildlife law enforcement

CATEGORY: MAMMAL
Scientific Name: *Damaliscus pygargus* (Pallas, 1967)

Subspecies: **Bontebok**, **Bunt**, or **Le Bonte** (*Damaliscus pygargus dorcas* = *D. dorcas dorcas*)

Blesbok or **Blessbock** (*Damaliscus pygargus phillipsi* = *D. d. phillipsi* or *D. albifrons*)

Other synonyms = *grisea*, *maculata*, *personata*, *scripta*.

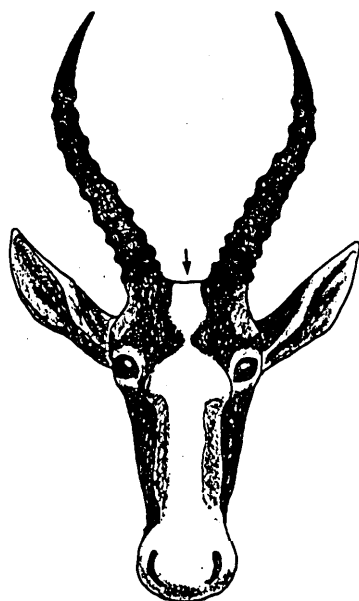
BONTEBOK is listed Appendix II (CITES) and Endangered (MA) as (*Damaliscus dorcas dorsalis*)

PROBLEM:

Differentiating between **BONTEBOK** (*D. p. dorcas*) and **BLESBOK** (*D. p. phillipsi*) in hunting trophy shipments. Specimens are imported as salted hides, capes, skulls, and/or horns; as skulls and horns; as back skins; as fully processed mounts, or as combinations thereof.

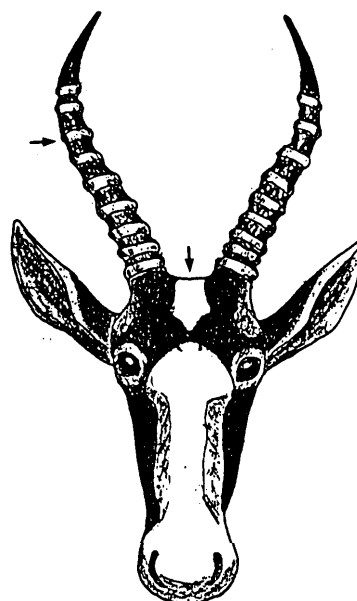
DIAGNOSTIC FEATURES :

Damaliscus pygargus dorcas
BONTEBOK



1. HORNS: black with transverse rings grey to greyish black.
2. FACE: white blaze or band generally continuous from base of horns to nose.

Damaliscus pygargus phillipsi
BLESBOK



1. HORNS: dark grey to greyish yellow with transverse rings yellowish or straw colored.
2. FACE: white to cream-colored blaze or band interrupted by a dark narrow band between the eyes.

DISTRIBUTION: South Africa

NOTE: Watch for painted or dyed horns on fully processed mounts. Maybe confused with Topi/Tsessebe/Sassaby (*D. lunatus*), CITES Appendix III (Ghana), if only horns and skulls are present (See p.2). Game ranching has been increasingly popular in South Africa, which may have resulted in Bontebok/Blesbok intergradation. Animals found with overlapping characteristics should be sent to the lab for verification.

Identification Notes
for wildlife law enforcement

CATEGORY

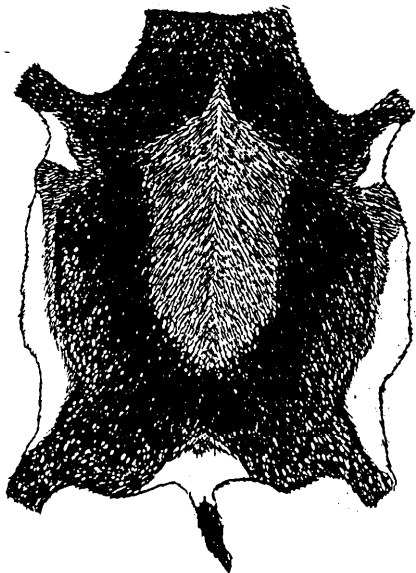
MAMMAL

Scientific Name/s: Damaliscus pygargus (Pallas, 1967)

DIAGNOSTIC FEATURES (continued):

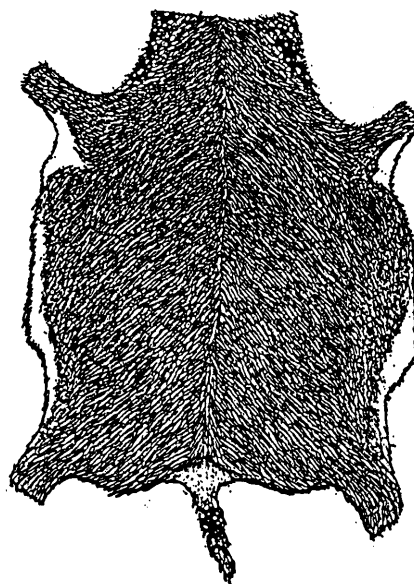
Damaliscus pygargus dorcas
BONTEBOK

3. BODY: rump patch around base of tail white; lower legs and underparts of body white.



Damaliscus pygargus phillipsi
BLESBOK

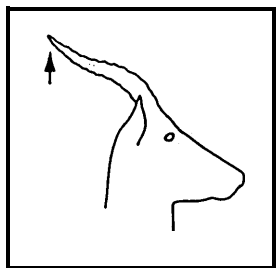
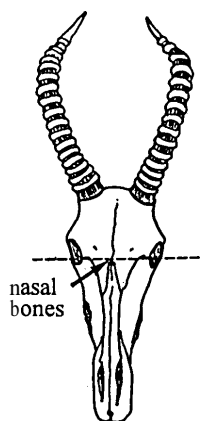
3. BODY: rump patch around base of tail small and paler than body but not white; outer legs dark to hooves; underparts off-white.



SIMILAR SPECIES COMPARISON:

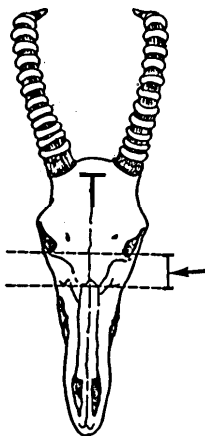
BONTEBOK / BLESBOK

Note: upper ends of nasal bones are even with eye sockets; horn tips point upward.



TOPI

Note: upper ends of nasal bones are below eye sockets; horn tips point backward.



REFERENCES:

- A. Roberts, 1954. The Mammals of South Africa. Central News Agency, South Africa.
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J. Dorst and P. Dandelot, 1990. A Field Guide to the Larger Mammals of Africa. Collins, London.
D. E. Wilson and D. M. Reeder, 1993. Mammal Species of the World, 2nd Edition. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.